

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE WAIPARA RIVER WORKING PARTY HELD ON MONDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2009 AT 7.00PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 66 CARTERS ROAD, AMBERLEY.

PRESENT

Rob Gerard (Chair), Fred Murray, Mark Jones, David Beer, Ross Williams, Brent Maguire, Leigh Love, B Jensen, Julie Coster, Tony Fitzsimmons, Ross Little, Gareth Renowden

APOLOGIES

Norton Hiller, Sarah Hughes-Games, Paul Williams, Douschka Saunders, Garry Jackson

IN ATTENDANCE

Helga Rigg, Amelia Dalley (Minutes), Richard Goord, Andrew Parrish, Jane Demeter, Jon Harding

MINUTES

21 September 2009

THAT THE MINUTES BE TAKEN AS READ

Coster/Maguire

CARRIED

12 October Minutes

THAT THE MINUTES BE ACCEPTED AS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD

Murray/Maguire

CARRIED

Ross Little and Gareth Renowden joined the meeting

MATTERS ARISING FROM 21 SEPTEMBER MINUTES

Army dealt with.

Letter to LINZ not yet written.

MATTERS ARISING FROM 12 OCTOBER MINUTES

Action Point – Mayor to meet with Jeff Scholes

Action Point – Mayor to write to LINZ

Further information requested on water quality monitoring. H Rigg gave information on the monitoring of the water quality in the Waipara River, the former dump site in Waipara and the monitoring of the water supply. The Working Party requested further information on the results of the testing of the river water and the dump site. Ecan Officers have offered to come and speak to the group on the testing and results of the water in the Waipara River.

Action Point – H Rigg to organise Ecan to come and speak to the Working Party

Action Point – H Rigg to follow up on results from the testing of the dump site

N Hiller requested through L Love that the minutes better reflect his opinion on fossil taking from the Waipara River. N Hiller wants to encourage responsible fossil taking. Generally people who are responsible about fossil collecting are already aware of the values and signage may not be appropriate. The Department of Conservation endorses this. It was generally agreed that signage should include reference to natural values in general.

H Rigg proposed a new motion based on the discussion at the meeting around vehicle access in the upper Waipara River.

THAT MOTOR VEHICLE ACCESS BE BANNED FROM THE WAIPARA RIVER IN THE AREA BETWEEN WHITE GORGE AND DOCTORS GORGE, UNLESS BY PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE LANDOWNERS

Beer/Gourd

CARRIED

WORKING PAPER SIX

Ecological/Biodiversity Values

Jon Harding (Chair of Post Graduate Studies, School of Biological Sciences, University of Canterbury) gave a presentation on the ecological values of the Waipara River. Mr Harding believes that rivers are better off without willows. He noted that whilst willows do provide habitat for aquatic species, they also provide refuge for a number of predators with respect to birds nesting in the river. When questioned, Mr Harding responded that he was not sure what effect the use of Roundup would have on biodiversity although he did consider it would have an effect on fungi. B Jensen noted that it is the only poison that can be used over waterways. Drilling and poisoning is another option for the eradication of willows.

There was a general discussion around the threat of didymo to the river. It was noted that there has been an increasing amount of work and research done on the effects of didymo. The Working Party expressed concern at the effects didymo might have on the Waipara River should it become infected. Mr Harding noted that the presence of didymo would completely alter the ecosystems of the river with macro-invertebrates being displaced by snails and midges. The Working Party agreed that awareness is key as didymo is only spread by humans.

G Bennett expressed his concern that the Hurunui Water Project proposes to bring water from the Hurunui River, which is infected with didymo into the Waipara catchment. It was noted that didymo can't spread upstream. The Working Party generally agreed that signage be recommended to inform people.

There was further discussion regarding the ecological values of the river. It was suggested that students be utilised for summer research projects if more information is required about the ecosystems of the Waipara River. It was noted that the Department of Conservation does not undertake full ecological surveys of rivers tending to undertake bird surveys only. The Working Party discussed the need to undertake a survey of the river now to provide a baseline for future monitoring of the river. It was noted that trends over time are important in determining the health of the river and its ecosystem and that as such it was important to commit to more than just one ecological survey of the river. It was suggested that the health of the ecosystems within the river be monitored on an annual basis.

THAT THE WORKING PARTY RECOMMENDS INITIATING A REGIME OF REGULAR ECOLOGICAL SURVEYS OF THE WAIPARA RIVER

Bennett/Murray

CARRIED

Action Point – Encourage rūnanga to attend the next Waipara River meeting

Next meeting confirmed for 14 December 2009

Meeting closed 9.00pm